



## Writing Your Rough Draft



1. **BEGIN WITH A TOPIC SENTENCE.** Your topic sentence should always remind readers of **your paper's major focus** (*ie. The person, the place or the era your paper is about*). Your topic sentence should **ALSO introduce the "subtopic"** that this particular paragraph will be about (*ie. "Early life", "geography" or "timeline of key events"*). Using those key words, write a complete sentence. Keep it simple.

**For example:**

Before discovering the New World, Christopher Columbus had an early life much like anyone else.

2. **DO NOT USE PERSONAL PRONOUNS OR ANNOUNCE THAT YOU'RE WRITING A PAPER.** ("I", "YOU", "ME", "MY", "OUR", "WE", "US") While it may be tempting, NEVER use words or phrases like, "My paper is about..." or "I am writing about..." or, "This paragraph is about..."
3. **FOLLOW YOUR NOTE CARDS AND ADD YOUR RESEARCH.** Organize your note cards in an order that will make the most sense to your readers (Just be sure to keep the note cards for your subtopics with similar upper left hand corner headings altogether.) If your notes weren't already written in complete sentences, now is the time to think about how you want to write those notes in complete sentences. Use a combination of different sentences in your writing so that it has a more formal and mature fluency. To do that, use a combination of simple sentences (*remember "simple subjects" and "simple predicates"??*) AND compound sentences (compound subjects and predicates).

**For example—these are simple sentences....BOOOOORING.**

Christopher Columbus was born on October 31, 1451. Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy. He had two younger brothers.

**These are compound sentences... MUCH BETTER!**

Christopher Columbus was born on October 31, 1451 in Genoa, Italy. He had two older brothers.

4. **ADD TRANSITIONS.** To help you lead from one fact into the next, use transitional words and phrases.

**For example:**

- And
- Not only...but also

- Also
- Furthermore
- In addition
- For example,
- For instance,
- In particular
- Specifically,
- The first (Second, another, etc.) example, reason....
- ...but...
- however...
- on the other hand
- otherwise
- instead
- in contrast
- yet
- nevertheless
- even so
- although
- even though
- despite the fact that...
- despite
- in the same way...
- so...
- as a result...
- therefore...
- as a consequence...
- consequently....
- first...
- second...
- finally...
- in conclusion...
- meanwhile...
- or..
- whether...or
- if... (then)
- in fact...
- actually..
- in other words...
- either... or
- neither.. nor

**5. WRITE A CONCLUDING/SUMMARY SENTENCE.** Wrap-up your paragraph by summarizing the important points in that paragraph. At bare minimum, you need to repeat your paper's focus and subtopic again. You may also choose to transition into your next paragraph (*recommended!*)

**For example: (just a wrap-up)**

Christopher Columbus' early life began much like everyone else's.

**Transition into next subtopic:**

While Christopher Columbus' early life began much like everyone else's, his life accomplishments were certainly much more significant than others'.

**6. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH GOOD SENTENCES.** Body paragraphs should have a minimum of 8-10 sentences—make sure they're not all simple ones though! Introductory and concluding paragraphs should have a minimum of 5-7 sentences.